

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION 8

999 18TH STREET - SUITE 300

DENVER, CO 80202-2466

<http://www.epa.gov/region08>

REF: 8EPR-ER

POLLUTION REPORT
LIBBY ASBESTOS
Libby, Lincoln County, Montana

I. HEADING

Date: November 29, 2000
Site Name: Libby Asbestos (Export & Screening Plants)
From: Paul Peronard, OSC
Johanna Miller, OSC
Duc Nguyen, OSC
To: Patty Smith, EPA Headquarters
POLREP No.: #2

II. BACKGROUND

Site No.: BC
Response Authority: CERCLA
CERCLIS No: MT0009083840
NPL Status: NA
Action Memorandum Status: Approved 5/23/00
Start Date : 6/01/00
Demobilization Date: TBD
Completion Date: TBD

III. SITE INFORMATION**A. Incident Category**

Time Critical, Fund-Lead and PRP-Lead

B. Site Description

Vermiculite was discovered in Libby, Montana, in 1881 by gold miners and in the 1920's the Zonolite Company began mining it. Before the mine closed in 1990, Libby produced about 80% of the world's supply of vermiculite. Vermiculite has been used in building insulation and as a soil conditioner. In Libby, refining operations handling materials containing amphibole asbestos fibers, occurred at four main locations:



performed, soil contaminated with greater than 2% asbestos was found at several areas at 10- foot depth.

Similarly, at the Export Plant, 76 out of 109 samples contained detectable levels of amphibole asbestos by PLM, with 17 samples containing asbestos at or greater than 2%, and one sample measuring 10%. At both properties, pockets of unexpanded and expanded vermiculite are visible at the surface in many locations.

IV. RESPONSE INFORMATION

A. Situation

1. Current situation/removal actions to date:

The Export Plant (60% Completion): (See initial report for background information)

- **Removal Activities:** *On October 2, 2000, W.R. Grace moved the Millwork West's lumber operations to the new temporary location off Highway 2. The Planer Shop, Warehouse, Lumber Storage, and a Small Shed had been decontaminated and passed the final clearance test. In general, decontamination of the buildings consists of removal of interior walls, wooden floor, and roof; power washing inside the building; and spraying encapsulant to the interior walls. Approximately 50 cubic yards of soil from a pit that contains oil/diesel on the southwest corner of the Site was removed and will be disposed at the Zonolite mine after the State approves it. The steel rail and railroad ties from the southern area were removed by the Burlington Northern Railroad. Excavation around the rail spur and the Export Plant areas is scheduled to be completed by W.R. Grace on the week of November 27, 2000. The concentrated calcium chloride in powder form was sprayed at the Export Plant and the Rainey Creek road for dust control. The EPA is continuing oversight of clean-up activities. The removal activities at the Export Plant is scheduled to be completed by December 15, 2000.*
- **Disposal Activities:** *As of November 27, 2000, 31 truckloads (approximately 310 cubic yards) of debris were disposed at the toe of the 12th level dump at the Zonolite mine. This material included debris, associated with building decontamination, and unsalvageable items throughout the Export Plant. Approximately 1,800 cubic yards of excavated soil were disposed at the area adjacent to the Glory Hole of the mine. Seven thousand (7,000) cubic yards of borrowed material have been backfilled at the Site.*

D. Key Issues

- *Establishing a repository for the excavated soil and debris at the Screening Plant.*
- *Seeking agreements to access 1) the mine (oversight and repository), and 2) KDC properties adjacent to the Screening Plant for cleanup (which now is owned by W.R. Grace).*

V. COST INFORMATION

Total Site Ceiling	\$5,815,000
Committed Costs (as of 9/30/00):	\$3,589,273

VI. DISPOSITION OF WASTES

(None at this time)

Libby Asbestos #2
POLREP DIST. LIST
EPA INTERNAL MAIL ONLY
December 4, 2000
ROSELLA 8EPR-ER

1. DOUG SKIE, 8EPR-ER
2. STEVE HAWTHORN, 8 EPR-ER
3. MARTY SCHMIDT, 8EPR-ER
4. JOHN MARSHALL, 8EPR-ER
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